Campsbourne Community-Based Research: Pilot project report

Other

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CAMPSBOURNE COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH (PILOT)

Project Report
July 2022

Executive summary

Campsbourne Estate lies in the heart of Haringey. Despite its location towards the more affluent end of the borough, its rich architectural heritage, diverse population and proximity to green space and good schools/health centres, the estate is home to significant deprivation with some of the worst rates in England, particularly in terms of ‘housing and services’ and ‘income deprivation affecting the elderly’. This was exacerbated by Covid-19, which had a profound impact on mental illness as well as health in general, education and learning, although more positive outcomes included the establishment of a local Mutual Aid group and Foodbank.

Haringey Labour Party Manifesto 2022-26 pledged to empower local communities to make change, putting residents at the heart of decision-making. In 2021 residents were awarded a Civic Fellowship from the Institute of Community Studies to pilot a 6-month community-based research and training project on the estate.

Grounded in Community-Based Participatory Research and a feminist ethics of care, the training was structured around three modules, each of which included a short period of data collection: i) understanding ourselves (autoethnographic research); ii) understanding our peers (peer research); and understanding our community (action research). A diverse cohort of 10 community researchers was recruited including 6 individuals and 2 family teams. The entirety of the research grant was spent on compensating the community researchers for their participation in both the training and data collection at London Living Wage.

Autoethnographic research (through multimodal journaling) revealed positive and negative examples of lived experience and started to map the meaningful places on the estate, identifying the need for a community hub. Peer research (through informal interviews with family and neighbours, and a formal survey administered to residents) considered difference and representation, expanding the map of meaningful spaces, identifying those that felt inaccessible and exploring what different groups would look for in a community hub and what might prevent their engagement. Action research (through organisational case studies and a workshop with Haringey Council) built on the research findings to develop three proposals that were shared with councillors and other stakeholders: i) council to rent the Kurdish Advice Centre on e day a week as a space for information sharing, advice sessions, classes and socialising; ii) council to work with a team of young people to co-design an outside sports facility; iii) council to work with a representative residents group to map accessibility and safety on the estate and consider appropriate actions. It was stressed that budgets must include fair compensation for participants and the agreement of tangible outcomes.

Next steps include: i) supporting the council to implement recommendations fairly and responsibly; ii) continuing to strengthen relationships with the key organisation in the estate (iii) expanding the network; iv) seeking funding for further research and development work; and v) exploring implications for other participatory processes.
1. Introduction

This report sets out the context, processes, findings and recommendations of a community-based research project conducted in the Campsbourne Estate (Haringey, North London) over a 9-month period in 2021-22. Funded by a civic fellowship from the Institute of Community Studies, the project piloted a novel approach to training community researchers who undertook exploratory action research into the experience, expertise, needs, priorities of residents living on the estate.

2. Context

*Demographics and geographical inequalities*

Campsbourne Estate is located in Hornsey ward in the local authority of Haringey; an exceptionally diverse borough with the majority of residents identifying either as BAME or ‘White Other’ and with 30% (the 6th highest rate in London) of residents who do not speak English as their main language (Haringey Council 2022). As the 4th most deprived borough in the city, Haringey is characterised by significant inequality, with deprivation levels tending to rise from west to east (ONS 2021). As Figure 1 below indicates, Campsbourne Estate is positioned close to the centre of borough.

**Figure 1: Neighbourhood deprivation rates in Haringey**
Campsbourne Estate borders the South-East side of Alexandra Palace Park, a 196 acre public site surrounding the Grade II listed Alexandra Palace or ‘People’s Palace’ which was built originally in 1863. With some of its architecture also dating back to the late 1860s, the Campsbourne Estate offers a rare insight into layers of social investment and particularly that following the 1890 Housing of the Working Classes Act: Edwardian cottages and maisonettes; Campsbourne Primary School, which opened in 1897 and exemplifies the late Queen Anne style Board school; 1950s ‘garden suburb’ inspired walkways and communal gardens; the Le Corbusier style Wat Tyler House built in the early 1960s. And to the east of the estate, the twenty-first century private developments and Sainsbury’s supermarket built on the site of the old baths and washhouse and the Hornsey Waterworks (see Hinshelwood 2011). Plans for the Estate’s latest development are currently underway: a 7-floor block of 15 council flats to be built in an existing car park.

Despite the rich heritage of the estate and its proximity to parks, good schools, health facilities and transport links, the latest available data reveals high levels deprivation (IMD 2019). Campsbourne Estate ranks within the bottom 8% of neighbourhoods in England for income deprivation, a figure consistent with the data for Haringey where the median hourly pay is now 4.9% below the London average and with the fourth largest proportion of residents earning below the London Living Wage of all London boroughs (Haringey Council 2022). Deprivation rates in Campsbourne Estate are even starker for the elderly, ranking within the bottom 2% of neighbourhoods in England for this group. Campsbourne includes three blocks of Supported housing (two blocks of ‘sheltered accommodation and one block of ‘community good neighbours accommodation’, totalling 86 units), which originally catered for elderly residents but has extended its provision to those experiencing homelessness as well as others in need of support. Though data is not yet available at the neighbourhood level, trends in Haringey suggest an increase in unemployment (the second highest rates of out-of-work benefits in London - Trust for London 2021) and in-work poverty. As of May 2022, Haringey also has the 8th highest number of people on Universal Credit in London1. However, despite the low income levels, many households in the estate are unable to access social housing and other benefits due both to visas which grant No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) and to the severe housing shortage, which has led to a notable increase in private housing since 2011 and a corresponding decrease in the proportion renting from the local authority.

In 2021 Haringey had the third highest rate of statutory homeless in London (80% higher than the London level) and the third highest rate of repossessions2. Although Haringey’s fulfilment of their statutory homelessness duty is in line with the London

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1 https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=13379&mod-area=E09000014&mod-group=AllBoroughInRegion_London&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup
2 The latest data on repossessions is from 2019, since evictions were paused during the pandemic 2020-2021 (Trust for London 2021: https://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/data/reposessions-borough)
average, in 2021 it fell short in terms of prevention, “owing the most homelessness prevention duty in London” (Trust for London 2021³)

While the cost of rent in Haringey is only slightly above the London average, this is undoubtedly higher in Hornsey, where rents are more in line with the west of the borough. Indeed, as indicated by the 2019 IMD, the streets to the east of the Campsbourne Estate, (largely comprised of privately rented residences) fall within the bottom 0.3% of neighbourhoods in England for deprivation related to housing and services (or 112th out of 32,844 neighbourhoods where 1 is most deprived). This is likely due to a combination of the high cost of renting in the more desirable west side of the borough coupled with the significant housing shortages in the area. Even for those eligible for council housing, there is currently an average wait of 8 years for a two bedroom property in Haringey (Haringey Council 2022). The 2020-21 English Housing Survey showed that while levels of “non-decent” homes have seen annual falls over time, the reductions have slowed in the last 3 years. Private Rented homes are most likely to be non-decent (21% of homes in 2020), compared to LA or Housing Association Homes (13%).

Impact of Covid-19

Haringey has been disproportionately affected by Covid-19, recording the third highest “excess death” rate in the UK between 15th March 2020 – 15th January 2021⁴. As highlighted by Haringey Council’s 2022 State of the Borough report:

Older people, BAME communities, people with disabilities, and people from disadvantaged socio-economic background have been more affected by the covid-19 virus in terms of illness and deaths… Significant gender inequalities have emerged during the lockdown. While men have been more likely to die from covid-19, women have been disadvantaged in areas including childcare and employment. Women from BAME communities have been disadvantaged to a greater extent.(Haringey Council 2022: 5)

The pandemic and associated ‘cost of living’ crisis is likely to have exacerbated existing mental health challenges. In 2021 Haringey residents reported lowest levels of life satisfaction since 2011-12 and there are higher rates of serious mental illness than in London. Anxiety levels are now 10% higher than they were in 2011-12, 7.7% higher than the London average and the rate of hospital admissions for self-harm in 10-24 year olds was slightly above the London average (Haringey Council 2022). Haringey has the sixth highest rate of domestic abuse with injury in London, and the fourth highest rate of Knife Crime with Injury in London over the last two years (ibid). More positively, the pandemic led to the formation of a mutual aid network for Hornsey with a dedicated group for the Campsbourne Estate and sub-groups for some of its streets/blocks⁵. Existing organisations based in the estate (e.g. Campsbourne Primary School, the Kurdish Advice Centre, Campsbourne Baptist Church and the Sheltered Accommodation) extended their services to provide

³ https://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/data/homelessness-duties-borough/
⁵ https://www.mutual-aid.co.uk/group/hornsey-mutual-aid
support for their different communities and residents also make use of the Hornsey Foodbank, which was established during the pandemic⁶.

**Community consultation**

The last targeted consultation of Campsbourne Estate occurred in 2008 in response to some community funding made available from the New River Development under a Section 106 planning obligation⁷. Residents set 3 clear objectives to guide these improvements:

1. Making the estate greener and more environmentally attractive.
2. Providing good quality and safe facilities for young people to play sport, both as a healthy lifestyle and an distraction from anti-social behaviour.
3. Making the estate environment safer, designing out places where residents fear anti-social behaviour.

Though some work was conducted in 2009 in response to the first and third objective, the provision of an open-air sports facility was never implemented. Furthermore, the community centre, which was also used to provide some youth services, was leased to the Kurdish Community as The Kurdish Advice Centre (Komkar) in 2014.

The recent manifesto of Haringey's Labour Party (2022-26) commits:

> “to empower our local communities to make change, putting local people at the heart of decision-making.”

Responding to issues specific to the borough (as well as broader national and global challenges) the manifesto also emphasises support for children and young people, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), climate justice; homes for the future; protecting our residents; tackling inequality; a culturally rich borough; and ‘living well’.

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⁶ [https://www.hornseyfoodbank.com](https://www.hornseyfoodbank.com)
⁷ [https://www.haringey.gov.uk/local-democracy/have-your-say-haringey/campsbourne-estate-consultation](https://www.haringey.gov.uk/local-democracy/have-your-say-haringey/campsbourne-estate-consultation)
3. The project

**Background and approach**

In July 2021 the Campsbourne Estate Mutual Aid coordinators and some community activists met to discuss the challenges and opportunities revealed by the estate’s response to the pandemic. An initial list of priorities included:

- Understanding different community perspectives and experiences of poverty (acknowledging conflict/prejudice/tensions);
- Mapping the estate (including the physical space, systems and services) to identify challenges and opportunities for improvement;
- Participatory action planning ('re-imagining' better services and systems and agreeing pragmatic actions with the council);
- Training a cadre of residents to produce and use relevant knowledge for the community (ensuring representativeness in terms of housing status, migration status, welfare status, ages, nationalities/languages, ethnicities etc.)

It was agreed that a community-led action research project could respond to these priorities. Further discussions with the Institute of Community Studies (Young Foundation) and Haringey Council (Ward councillors and the Corporate Policy Team) expanded the aims of this project to:

- Explore experiences of poverty in diverse urban settings post covid-19
- Trial a participatory agenda-setting and planning mechanism to feed into council decision-making processes
- Develop community research capacity
- Contribute to material changes on the Campsbourne Estate

A proposal was developed in response to these aims and funding from the Institute of Community Studies was secured in the form of a Civic Fellowship grant to support the following objectives:

- Mobilise a diverse, trust-based cohort of community researchers
- Co-design a pilot research, training and participatory planning process
  - Pilot a 3-module training programme for community-based researchers
  - Pilot data collection, building on learning from the training modules
  - Draw on data to inform a participatory planning process
- Disseminate findings via workshops, presentations and reports

The project was grounded in Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), an approach which incorporates elements of action research, participatory action research, participatory health research and feminist participatory action research (see Banks et al 2013; Brydon-Miller 2012; Groot et al 2019; Jull et al 2017; Reason and Bradbury 2001; Snoeren et al 2012). Common to these approaches is a commitment to maximise the participation of those whose life is the subject of the research in all stages of the process and to work to reduce or eliminate injustices and/or inequities that have been identified by community members themselves. CBPR methodology enables researchers to use a wide variety of participatory and
arts based research methods alongside more traditional methods such as surveys, focus groups and interviews.

Participants

Given the complex circumstances of residents and the importance of establishing a safe, inclusive space, the pilot cohort of researchers were selected from existing networks of volunteers with the Campsbourne Mutual Aid group, Hornsey Foodbank and Campsbourne Primary School community. 10 individuals were recruited: 6 individual researchers and 2 family teams (comprising of a couple in one case and a mother and teenage daughter in the other.) The inclusion of families enabled us to consider difference in representation from the offset as well as the complex dynamics of collective experience and consensus-building. While children were not directly involved in the pilot, all of the researchers were either parents, teenagers with younger siblings or worked in children and youth services. A creche run by two volunteer parents was available for all of the sessions and most of the parents brought their children along.

The researchers were made up of 8 women and 2 men aged between 14 and 55. Ethnic identities included: Kurdish, Turkish, White British, British Caribbean, Black African and Iranian. They were supported by a project coordinator (an academic researcher based at the Open University), two researchers from the Institute of Community Studies, a research assistant and two volunteers.

With the exception of the ICS staff, the whole research team lived in or near to the estate. The Campsbourne researchers inhabited a range of housing, citizenship/visa, and welfare circumstances and their expertise included a diverse mix of professional qualifications and skills and personal experience including proficiency in wide range of languages and complex care work. Their lived experience also included trauma derived from extreme poverty, homelessness, incarceration, complex migration trajectories, domestic abuse, grief, disability and medical conditions including mental illness. Due to challenging personal circumstances, one participant withdrew after the first session, however, the remainder completed the project and have since committed to continuing an expanded version of the network beyond the scope of the funded project.

The 10 community researchers were paid an honorarium above London Living Wage for both the training and data collection. The remainder of the grant was spent on a small contribution to the Kurdish Advice Centre where the sessions were held. The professional researchers participated on a voluntary basis.

Training

The training integrated elements of a ‘strength-based’ approach (e.g. ‘appreciative inquiry’ and ‘asset mapping’) to recognise and build on individual and community resources. However, it was also mindful of the criticisms of this approach:

- that while it has been heralded by policy makers as a ‘miracle cure’ it may not account for contexts characterised by few resources and serious challenges (Slasberg and Beresford 2017);
that it tends to focus on social and relational assets (e.g. community networks) over material resources (e.g. money and infrastructure) with the assumption that these can be unproblematically harvested (Daly and Westood 2018);
• that the focus on relational attributes could exacerbate inequality, involving those less likely to be vulnerable to inadequacies in public services (ibid);
• that the approach can be ‘overly optimistic about the strength of social capital, community, and community development’ and that it is rooted in individualism, extending neo-liberal notions of resilience, self-help and self-responsibility it glosses over the structural inequalities that hamper personal and social development and create hardship and distress (Grey 2011);
• and linked to the previous point, that it insufficiently engages with inequalities (including those relating to resources and power) that are significant drivers of ill health, need and dependency in UK society (Friedli, 2013).

These limitations were particularly problematic for our framing of the Campsbourne community as characterised by difference and inequalities, which we saw as both a challenge for participation but also a valuable resource for collective analysis and action (Woelders et al 2015). In response, our training was structured around three modules, progressing from analysis of individual experience, expertise, needs and priorities to explore difference within families and between groups with implications for representation, and finally, on to collective consensus-building and action:

1. **Understanding ourselves:** tapping into our own knowledge and experience; reflecting on our motivations for change; deciding how we will work together and our collective responsibilities; and learning about ‘auto-ethnographic’ research (Chang et al 2016; Ellis et al 2011; Snoeren et al 2016).

2. **Understanding our peers:** tapping into the knowledge and experiences of our families, friends and neighbours and exploring their motivations for change; thinking about difference, representation (whose voices are included or excluded), and tensions between our interests, reaching some consensus; and learning about ‘peer research’ methods (see Yang and Dibb 2020).

3. **Understanding our community:** generating a collective understanding of the community through mapping methods; bringing together our different knowledge sources to reach some consensus on priorities for change and working with key community stakeholders (including the council) to translate this into an action plan; learning about ‘action research’ methods (Brydon-Miller 2008, 2012; Reason and Bradbury 2001).

Initially planned to run for 6 months, the project was extended by a further 3 months due to delays because of covid and postponement of the final workshop due to local elections (May 2022). Changes were also made to the methodology after the ‘peer research data collection’ revealed the limits to the representativeness of the survey and prompted a shift to an organisational case study approach. Given that the research was community-led with flexible funding from the ICS and not beholden to university timeframes, these adaptations were easily made and suggest that ‘messy research’ is more easy to accommodate when processes are led by the communities they serve (see Cook 2009; Thomas-Hughes 2018).
Ethics

Literature reviews reveal a range of ethical challenges in action research (Brydon-Miller 2008, 2012; Smith et al. 2010) and community-based participatory research (Banks et al. 2013; Boser 2007; Mikesell, Bromley, and Khodyakov 2013; Souleymanov et al. 2016; Wilson, Kenny, and Dickson-Swift 2018) These challenges focus on balancing hierarchies, collaboration with co-researchers, establishing trust, control and ownership of the research and working towards social justice. Given the complex circumstances and vulnerabilities of residents living on the Campsbourne Estate, it was essential to carefully consider the ethical implications of this research in advance but also to co-create an ethical protocol with the community researchers. Advice was sought from the Open University and Institute of Community Studies and guidance was built into each of the training modules through the following topics:

- **Safeguarding** (framed by a trauma-informed approach and considering the risks of causing distress as well as harm)
- **Research support systems** (including accessibility and inclusiveness, peer support and regular 1-to-1 ‘check-ins’ with the research coordinator, and an honorarium to support participation)
- **Informed consent** (information leaflets and consent forms adapted for family research teams and young participants)
- **Data management** (including anonymity and data storing/sharing)

However, given the complex and adaptive nature of the research, it is important to distinguish between an ‘ethics of regulation’ (such as those employed by formal ethics review processes) and a more responsive ‘ethics of care’. Banks and Westoby (2019), for example, highlight:

*A view of ethics as pertaining to matters of personal conduct, individual responsibility and blame [which] can be easily co-opted by neo-liberal and new managerial agendas… and used to control community development workers and activists, emphasising their ethical agency and responsibility for what are essentially structural problems beyond their control*

In contrast, they propose an ‘everyday ethics’ as relational, embodied and situated in the contexts and practices of community development work:

*Everyday ethics is about developing a particular type of ethical and political sensitivity; cultivating qualities such as care, courage and trustworthiness; and a willingness to be flexible, cope with complexity, contradictions and dilemmas.*

(Banks 2016:37)

Such an approach has close links to a feminist ethics of care (Barnes et al. 2015; Gilligan 1982; Noddings 2013; Sayer 2011; Tronto 1993, 2013; Walker 2007) and is particularly helpful for an adaptive and capacity-building approach such as ours, which seeks to strengthen community relationships and mobilise a network of resident-researchers who might continue to mobilise knowledge about and for the estate in the future.
4. Findings

4.1 Autoethnographic research

Through a 6-week period of ‘multimodal journaling’ (with diary entries based on text/photo/drawing/audio recording) participants developed visualisations of the trajectories which brought them to the Campsbourne Estate and maps of the spaces and places of importance to them within the estate (see Figures 2, 3 and 4)

Figure 2: Rivers of life and personal maps of the Campsbourne Estate

Figure 3: Multimodal journaling: positive experiences on the Estate
Positive experiences included the public parks, more gender equitable facilities and events like the Alexandra Palace fireworks as well as the school community’s involvement in a public event in support of migration. Examples were also given of more challenging events like hospital visits made better by additional support and activities for children.

Figure 4: Multimodal journaling: negative experiences on the Estate

Negative experiences included inadequate housing conditions (e.g. leaks and storage issues as well as dysfunctional elevators), parts of the estate which are unlit and feel unsafe and experiences of crime and antisocial behaviour.

Participants also chose to represent aspects of their lives symbolically through images e.g. Rubik’s cubes, mask, resuscitation dummies and prisons.

Key themes emerging from this autoethnographic data collection included:

- Mental health (anxiety, depression and loss of identity manifested in different ways – e.g. male migrants who are struggling to provide for their family and adjust to a lower profile professional identity than in their previous country and women feeling overwhelmed with care responsibilities)
- Safety/security (including safe or unsafe local spaces, antisocial behaviour and support/facilities such as lighting and CCTV cameras as well as response times from the council and police)
- Housing (access to social housing, problems with housing, inequalities within blocks were units are both privately and council rented, accountability systems – e.g. who is responsible for repairs)
- Benefits (access to information about accessing benefits)
- Employment (access to information, contacts and gate-keepers, language issues, qualifications)
- Culture/religion (openness of religious organisations to different groups)
- Young people (facilities and support services)
- Environment (green space, sustainability, ecology)

The autoethnographies informed a collective map of the Estate with the key places and organisations identified by the community researchers (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Map of key places and organisations on the Campsbourne Estate**

Other meaningful places to the researchers included:

- Places of work
- Neighbour’s homes
- Communal gardens
- Allotments
- The Reservoir
- Priory Park
- Nail bars/ Hair salons
- Charity shops
- Wood Green Mall
- The Afro-Caribbean supermarket
- The Fish and chip shop
- The Chicken and pizza shop
• Pubs
• Off licences
• Hornsey Soup kitchen
• Stay and play groups / soft play centres
• Medical centres
• Pharmacies
• The Post office
• The Laundrette

The autoethnographic mapping also revealed notable absences: the lack of a community centre since 2014, when the space was rented to the Kurdish Advice Centre; the lack of a youth centre or any facilities for young people such as outdoors gym equipment; the lack of a community shop, pub or café (since Govinda’s off license and the Nightingale pub closed); and a large empty plot of land which is owned by developers but has remained unused.

4.2 Peer Research

Collaborative analysis of the autoethnographic data led to the researchers deciding to focus the peer research on understanding which spaces and places in the estate were used or avoided; whether the broader community saw value in a ‘Community Hub’ as a space to bring residents together, share knowledge and resources and campaign for further changes on the estate and beyond; what such a hub might look like, where it might be located and what factors might prevent different groups from accessing it. To address these questions, the researchers co-designed an online survey that was disseminated through the virtual mutual aid network as well as manually, with hard copies shared with neighbours and via the Kurdish Advice Centre and Campsbourne Primary School networks. The survey was open for 3 weeks and 40 residents responded.

Survey respondents

In terms of coverage, respondents came from a wide range of streets and blocks across the Estate8. However, most of the respondents were middle-aged, female and identified as White (either British, Irish or Other) – see charts and table below.

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8 Eddington/Lotus Court (2); Myddelton Road (4); Pembroke Road (2); Miles Road (4); Elgar House (1); Boyton Road (4); Boyton Close (2); Campsfield Road (7); Newland house (3); Moore House (1); Goodwin Court (1); Campsbourne Road (1); Rhein house (2); Newland road (1); Chacewater, Boyton Road (1); Wat Tyler House (3) Chadwell Lane (1)
Respondents spoke a range of languages aside from English, the most prevalent being Turkish (9 respondents), Kurdish (4 respondents) and French (3 respondents). Other languages included: Albanian; Arabic; Farsi; Ga and Twi; Greek; Hausa; Italian; Punjabi; Russian; Spanish; Urdu and Welsh.

Only 6 participants identified as having a disability, which included: mobility issues, chronic pain, anxiety and depression.

**Survey responses**

The survey was structured around three groups of questions:

1. How do you experience existing spaces and places on the estate (including frequency of use, accessibility and sense of safety)?

2. What would you look for in a ‘community hub’?

3. What might prevent you from using a ‘community hub’?

In terms of frequency of use, Campsbourne school was ranked highest (reflecting the demographic of the respondents). Respondents also tended to use their communal gardens in their blocks with few residents using the allotments, central green space or Kurdish advice centre. Responses concerning social spaces in housing blocks and the space outside Sainsbury’s were more split between very frequent and very infrequent users.
Avoidance of certain spaces was largely to with perceptions of safety (as well as hygiene, accessibility and in one case, dominance of communal gardens by private renters over the council tenants in a building who complained about children accessing the gardens). One respondent also said that there were unaware that the Kurdish Centre was open to the general public.

A further 12 respondents used the comments section to request more and better resourced play areas for children and facilities for young people including gym equipment in the park.

Figure 6 below shows the area identified by respondents as unsafe.
Figure 6: spaces identified as unsafe by survey respondents

Spaces were seen as unsafe due to the following reasons:

- They were poorly lit with no CCTV cameras (7 respondents)
- They were dirty due to e.g. broken glass and rubbish, fly-tipping, rats infestations, or drugs-related paraphernalia (6 respondents)
- They included dangerous play equipment (3 respondents)
- They were sites of antisocial behaviour (20 respondents)
- Unwelcoming (3 respondents)

One respondent commented:

“It was much more communal and safe around Pembroke area when [the off-licence] was open... a welcome light. Also when the Nightingale pub was open it felt warmer. Now it's like a cold dormitory... when my child was younger it felt safer to have shops/pubs open on the estate...places of safety where you would know somebody... a sense of community”

9 The areas identified from north to south were: the south-east corner of Alexandra Palace; Penstock Road and tunnel; Rhein House car park; Campsbourne Food Garden at night; areas around Wat Tyler and the stairwell; the play area round the back of Campsfield Rd; Boyton Close alleyway; Miles Road; Eastfield Road street parking outside the Kurdish Advice Centre; Nightingale Lane and surrounding areas at night; the central garden space on Pembroke Road
All but two of the respondents indicated that they would value a hub space. Interestingly, the two who indicated that they were unlikely to use it were towards the younger and older age range (18-24 years and 65+ years). The remaining respondents prioritised the following functions (in order of importance):

1. A social place for parents/carers and their young children
2. A place for learning/classes/training
3. A cultural space (e.g. community library, gallery, theatre)
4. A space for sharing/swapping/lending things
5. A space to get advice support
6. A social space for teenagers
7. A place for activism
8. A place to share job opportunities
9. A social space for adults
10. A space with access to computers

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<th>Function</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>28.95%</td>
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<td>69.23%</td>
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<td>5.13%</td>
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<td>15.38%</td>
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<td>7.89%</td>
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<td>52.63%</td>
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<td>3.82</td>
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<tr>
<td>A place to share job opportunities</td>
<td>13.16%</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
<td>23.68%</td>
<td>7.89%</td>
<td>44.74%</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>3.61</td>
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<tr>
<td>A place for learning/classes/training (e.g. language/yoga/arts/skills)</td>
<td>5.13%</td>
<td>5.13%</td>
<td>5.13%</td>
<td>23.08%</td>
<td>61.54%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.31</td>
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<tr>
<td>A place for activism (e.g. discussing politics and social/environmental issues and exploring how to collectively make change happen)</td>
<td>10.81%</td>
<td>10.81%</td>
<td>18.92%</td>
<td>21.62%</td>
<td>37.84%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A cultural space (e.g. community library, galleries, community theatre etc.)</td>
<td>7.89%</td>
<td>5.26%</td>
<td>21.05%</td>
<td>15.79%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A space for sharing/swapping/lending things</td>
<td>7.89%</td>
<td>5.26%</td>
<td>21.05%</td>
<td>23.68%</td>
<td>42.11%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A space with access to computers</td>
<td>18.92%</td>
<td>18.92%</td>
<td>10.81%</td>
<td>16.22%</td>
<td>35.14%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While most participants thought they wouldn't be prevented from accessing the hub, 13 respondents said that their engagement would depend on cost and a further 13 respondents said that it would depend on the timing of operations (with weekdays during work hours as the most problematic times.) 6 respondents said that language could be a barrier and 2 respondents said they might be limited by their disability (mobility issues and depression/anxiety).
Finally, 4 respondents emphasised that any community hub must be diverse, inclusive and welcoming and a further 4 said that they were looking for a fun, social space, which is sorely lacking in the estate since the closure of the community centre and youth club. Additional suggestions for a hub included a community café and a swap-shed.

### 4.3 Action Research

**Representative community engagement**

Despite the insightful responses from the survey, the exercise revealed the limitations of the instrument for community engagement, especially in terms of engaging non-white as well as older and younger residents who were less likely to be a part of the Campsbourne School network. In response, the researchers proposed two alternative strategies:

- Focus groups with residents in each of the blocks in the estate
- More intensive engagement with the different institutions based on the estate, each of which serves a distinct group of residents.

In response, four mini case studies of key institutions serving the community were developed:

- Campsbourne Estate Mutual Aid group;
- Campsbourne School;
- Kurdish Advice Centre;
- Sheltered Accommodation

Other relevant institutions serving the estate included the local secondary school, health centres, Sainsbury’s supermarket, Campsbourne Baptist Church and the Campsbourne Community Food Garden. However, given the limited time and funding...
for this pilot, engagement with these institutions alongside the residential blocks was shelved for further phases of the project.

**Campsbourne Mutual Aid**

Formed at the start of the pandemic in March 2020, the network consists of a main WhatsApp group (approximately 70 participants) and 4 street-level sub-groups (approximately 30 additional participants.) During the 2020 lockdown, the network focused on sharing information and coordinating volunteers to deliver shopping and medical supplies, befriend elderly residents and respond to emergencies. The group was a part of the broader Hornsey Mutual Aid network and closely affiliated to the Hornsey Foodbank, which also emerged during the first wave of the pandemic. Since 2020, the group has evolved into a proxy residents group, sharing local information and continuing to offer support to residents in the estate.

Despite the diversity of the group (particularly in terms of ethnicity, nationality and languages spoken) it is limited to those with access to WhatsApp and participants tend to fall within the 18-65 years age group. It was the main channel of dissemination for the peer research survey and therefore interesting that the response rate was relatively low and not representative of the diversity of the group as a whole. This raises interesting questions about the limits of the network as a participatory mechanism for the estate.

**Campsbourne School**

Campsbourne School is a state-run primary school with an Ofsted rating of ‘good’ and one of the two local primary schools serving the estate. With a demographic representative of the diverse population of Hornsey it serves highly affluent home owners alongside those residing in social housing or registered as homeless.

In recent years the school has made a concerted effort to engage more marginalised families. This has involved diversifying staff and governing body, creating an EDI committee, updating the curriculum and relevant policies and engaging two key groups: ‘The Turkish-speaking community’ (through homework clubs, coffee mornings and recruitment of Turkish heritage staff and governors); and ‘Black Heritage Families’ (by appointment of a Black Heritage Lead, close engagement with the Black Families Network and coordination of events for families).

The Campsbourne research team are closely affiliated to the school with two governors and members of both the Black Heritage Families network and Turkish speaking network. As part of the asset-mapping exercise, the school was identified as a possible location for community events.

**Kurdish Advice Centre**

The Kurdish Advice Centre was relocated to the site of the former community centre in 2014. It offers a daily drop-in service for Kurdish families (approximately 70 across Haringey) with case workers available every day as well as cultural events for the community and classes that are open to the general public. It also serves as the local
The centre was identified as a possible location for the research training sessions by a Kurdish member of the research team and the management were supportive of the research and keen to engage residents in the Campsbourne Estate even beyond the Kurdish community. Challenges affecting the centre included lack of funds for repairs and inaccessibility of the centre to wheelchair users. Kurdish estate residents served by the centre have experienced significant challenges relating to housing, immigration, domestic violence and lack of support for informal care work.

**Sheltered Accommodation**

The sheltered accommodation is a council-funded facility located in two separate sites in the estate. Since the demographic of its residents was quite distinct from the research team (and survey respondents) meetings were held with the warden and manager and focus group was convened with a diverse group of 7 residents to discuss resident demographics, their lived experience on the estate, what they would like from a community hub and what might prevent their participation.

**Key findings from the meetings and focus group included:**

- A marked change from the original make-up of residents as primarily elderly people to increasingly those affected by homelessness, disabilities, substance-abuse and other factors necessitating ‘care in the community’.
- These new diversity made providing support and services for residents harder. However, despite the differences there appeared to be a strong sense of community and mutual support amongst the different residents who attended the focus group.
- Residents engaged in a range of independent activities (e.g. walking, gardening, swimming, cooking, attending social events) as well as activities organised by the sheltered accommodations (e.g. movement classes, emotional wellbeing sessions, arts and crafts, music and developing a memorial garden for their fellow residents who died during the pandemic).
- While residents had previously enjoyed free access to the large communal room (with unrestricted use of a TV as well as regular social events such as film and pizza nights), access has been restricted since the TV was stolen by one of the residents and currently, the space is only opened a few times a week for scheduled sessions.
- The warden also commented on staffing shortages and lack of funds, which limited supervised use of the space as well as the activities on offer.
- The residents were very positive about the idea of a community hub and suggested holding events in their hall as well as in the Kurdish Advice Centre. Staff were also keen to pool resources with the Mutual Aid network to increase volunteer numbers.
- Residents were particularly keen on the idea of tech classes to support use of devices and digital coms, buddying schemes, accompaniment to health visits, chair-based activities, a community choir, cooking sessions such as ‘cooking across cultures’ and ‘cooking on a budget’ and social events. They also
proposed developing a community newsletter with information about the location of different services and events each month.

- In terms of barriers to participation, residents mentioned mobility issues and in some cases language limitations. The warden also flagged the importance of DBS checks for volunteers.

*Priorities for action*

Participatory analysis of the four case studies, alongside the autoethnographic and peer research identified five key findings:

- **Significant enthusiasm for greater community participation**: Residents are keen to volunteer their time and skills and all of the organisations serving the estate were keen to offer their facilities and services for use by the broader community (provided the groups they served were also included). However, while the research team found the process enjoyable with a positive impact on their mental health and personal development, they were keen to point out that volunteering should not be used to undercut council investment in key services (see following point). They also stressed that there must be pre-defined benefits to community participants beyond ‘participating’. This might include training opportunities, paid compensation and tangible outcomes to the engagement – all preconditions of this research project.

- **Chronic underfunding of facilities, services and community participation**: A common challenge across all organisations was lack of funding, which meant they were unable to make best use of their resources and offer sustained provision. This also had an impact on the type of volunteers who could afford to commit their time. If more marginalised groups are to be brought into participatory decision-making processes, they should be compensated, ideally at the London Living Wage and budgets for participatory activities should be carefully calculated to take account of these costs.

- **Substantial concern with safety on the estate**: Concerns were expressed across all resident groups with certain parts of the estate flagged as particularly unsafe or inaccessible due to lack of lighting or CCTV cameras, antisocial behaviour or the perceived threat from large congregations of people, dangerous facilities, particularly those intended for use by children and unsanitary spaces.

- **An overwhelming need for a dedicated community space**: Despite the ad hoc services provided by different organisations on the estate, residents across all groups wanted a consistent ‘space’, information and advice, classes and cultural resources and events and for socialising (especially for those with young children, given the dearth of local ‘stay and play’ places in recent years). This could also be a space for councillor surgeries, since the current location in a local café may be a deterrent to residents who are struggling financially but may feel pressurized to buy a drink.

- **Facilities for young people**: While the participation of teenagers in the research was limited, it was clear that there is currently no provision for this group on
the estate and that the lack of safe spaces for young people is contributing to antisocial behaviour in spaces intended for other groups (such as children and elderly residents.) An outdoor sports facility has been identified as a priority for the estate since 2008, with resources allegedly committed to this and yet no progress has been made.

In response to these findings, the researchers identified three priorities for action:

- Haringey Council to fund 1 day per week at the Kurdish Advice Centre as a social space as well as regular space for advice sessions, information sharing and classes. A timetable for activities will be developed in collaboration with the different resident groups on the estate.

- Haringey Council to recommit to funding an open-air sports facility and to work in a participatory way with a team of young people to design this space;

- Haringey Council to work with a residents group of participatory planners to map security and accessibility on the estate and consider options in response.

These findings and recommendations were shared with councillors and other stakeholders in a public workshop in June 2022.
5. Conclusions and next steps

This research has shown that there are many individuals and organisations in the Campsbourne Estate committed to working together to improve the community for others as well as themselves. The estate is home to an exceptionally diverse range of residents with substantial experience and expertise but who are also facing a diverse range of challenges (many of which have been exacerbated by covid-19, Brexit and the cost of living crisis). By moving from a recognition of these individual assets, needs and priorities to discussions of difference and the challenges of representation and onwards to a participatory consensus-building, it has been possible to design a series of collective actions with wider-reaching and more sustained benefits than those responding to individual concerns. This has also led to the realisation that engaging embedded institutions may be a more effective strategy for participation than engaging individuals through more traditional consultation processes. It has also confirmed the limitations of a strength-based or assets-based approach, which may be helpful for confidence-building in individuals, identifying existing resources and pooling provision, however, is less helpful for confronting inequalities, inadequate public funding and the absence of key facilities and services (such as any type of provision for young people in the Campsbourne Estate, despite this being an explicit priority for the community since 2008.)

While the community researchers found that participating in the process was valuable in and of itself, they also realised that genuine engagement is very hard and takes significant time, patience and dedication (often from people and organisations who are already time-starved and under-funded.) People have very different circumstances and challenges. Unforeseen events cause delays and change the nature of the analysis. Consequently, trust, care, support and flexibility are key resources – all of which point to the benefits of embedded and sustained community research networks such as the one created in the Campsbourne Estate. At the same time, a sufficient budget is essential for participatory processes that factors in some compensation for participants and makes explicit the benefits of their participation.

Finally, this pilot has highlighted the importance of engaging local stakeholders, including policy makers. The participatory workshop which concluded this project was well-attended and participants were positive about the research and optimistic about the prioritised actions being implemented. The project team looks forward to following this progress as we continue to expand the network, engaging more organisations in the estate and using research as a resource to mobilise knowledge for change at the personal, community and policy level.
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References


